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(BOGGS-BECKER)

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WASHINGTON--NEW YORK REPUBLICAN CONGRESSMAN FRANK J. BECKER AND DEMOCRATIC WHIP HALE BOGGS OF LOUISIANA CLASHED ANGRILY ON THE HOUSE FLOOR TODAY OVER WHETHER THE COUNTRY WAS IN GOOD OR BAD SHAPE.

BECKER SPARKED THE VERBAL BATTLE WHEN HE DELIVERED A SHOUTING SPEECH CHARGING THAT AMERICA WAS "IN THE WORST DOMESTIC MESS" EVER.

IN ADDITION, BECKER DECLARED THAT "OUR COUNTRY'S FOREIGN POLICY HAS NEVER BEEN WORSE."

"WE ARE KICKING THE BRAINS OF OUR FRIENDS OUT," HE SAID, LISTING CANADA, GREAT BRITAIN, AND FRANCE AS EXAMPLES.

BOGGS JUMPED TO HIS FEET TO PROTEST, CALLING BECKER'S ATTACK ON THE ADMINISTRATION "POLITICAL."

BOGGS SAID BECKER HAD "JUST ENGAGED IN AN EXAGGERATION TO USE A VERY POLITE WAY TO DESCRIBE HIS REMARKS."

THE HOUSE DEMOCRATIC WHIP SAID THE COUNTRY NOW HAD THE HIGHEST GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT IN HISTORY. HE ALSO POINTED TO HIGH CORPORATION PROFITS AS PROOF AMERICA WAS NOT IN AN ECONOMIC MESS, AS BECKER HAD CHARGED.

"I FRANKLY ADMIT THERE ARE SOME PROBLEMS IN OUR ECONOMY," BOGGS SAID, "BUT PRESIDENT KENNEDY IS FACING UP TO THEM QUITE MANFULLY."

AS FOR FOREIGN POLICY, BOGGS SAID HE HAD NEVER SEEN AN ADMINISTRATION SHOW "MORE RESTRAINT."

"TO SAY THAT WE HAVE ALIENATED OUR NEIGHBOR TO THE NORTH AND GREAT BRITAIN IS JUST NOT SO," HE TOLD BECKER.

"WE DON'T LIVE IN A WORLD THAT HAS EASY ANSWERS," BOGGS SAID, ADDING THAT HE HOPED FUTURE CONGRESSIONAL SPEECHES ON FOREIGN POLICY COULD BE "OF A BIPARTISAN NATURE RATHER THAN A POLITICAL NATURE."

BECKER SNAPPED BACK THAT HIS CRITICISM WAS NOT POLITICAL AT ALL. HE SAID HE MADE HIS SPEECH OUT OF CONCERN "FOR MY COUNTRY."

BECKER SAID HE ALSO HAD LISTENED FOR 10 YEARS WHILE BOGGS MADE POLITICAL ATTACKS AGAINST THE REPUBLICANS ON THE HOUSE FLOOR.

"YOU SHOULD BE THE LAST ONE TO ACCUSE SOMEONE OF THIS," BECKER DECLARED.

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